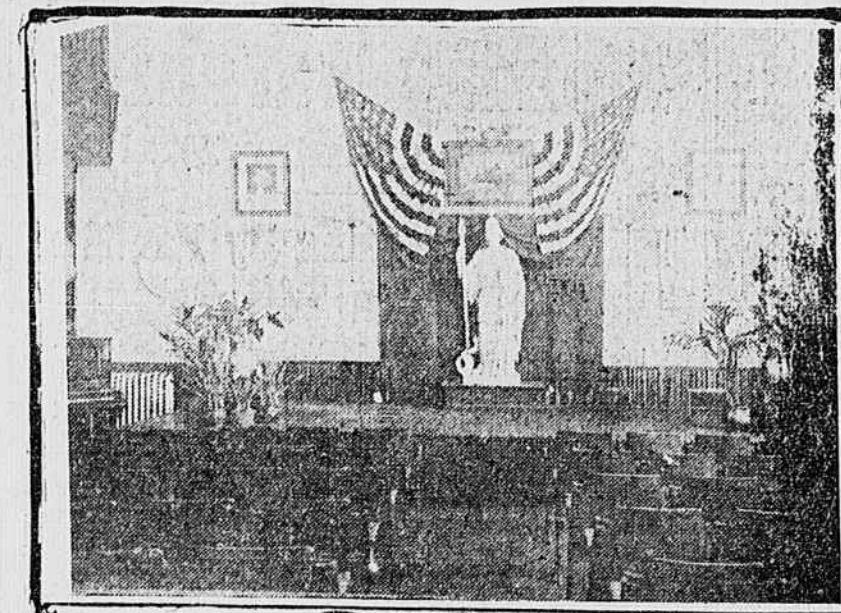


Richmond Proud of Its Public School System



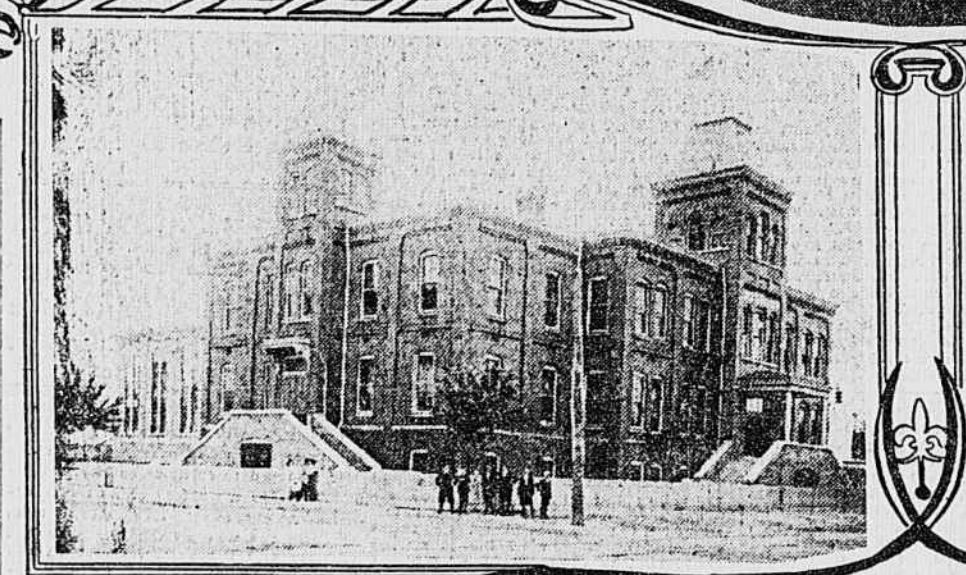
ROSTRUM OF ASSEMBLY HALL, W. H. RUFFNER SCHOOL.

RICHMOND surrenders to no city in Virginia its claim of possessing the finest public school system in the State. Its free educational sources are a monument to the city and a credit to the Old Dominion. Though some imperfections may still exist, through constant efforts on the part of the School Board the municipality is yearly adding new buildings and making improvements which in the course of a few years will take Richmond away from its present splendid position in relation to the school facilities of larger towns and place it in the foremost ranks with those places which boast of the most improved systems known to the twentieth century.

The John Marshall High School has few rivals. In every respect it is all that could be desired in the way of a model, sanitary, well-equipped and splendidly governed institution. The William Fox School, dedicated last September, is another building of which the city is proud. Though possibly not on an elaborate scale, it has all of the fine points of the high school. This is also true of the new Arenas School.

Old Structures Giving Way.

Of course, there are some school buildings of what very little of a complementary nature may be said. But to repeat, imperfections exist, and these are gradually being wiped out. Antiquated structures are giving way to new buildings, or are being remodeled just



THE FAIRMOUNT SCHOOL.

as ancient methods of instruction were eliminated to make room for modern ideas.

The valuation to-day of the school buildings and their equipment is \$1,480,838.95, of which sum the buildings alone are worth \$1,377,591.18, and the

furniture and other fixtures \$103,247.87.

There are nearly 30,000 students enrolled. Of these about 18,500 are white and more than 15,500 colored.

There are eighteen schools for white children and thirteen for colored.

Within the past decade there has been introduced into the elementary school curriculum new subjects, music, manual training, domestic science, ethics and text-books in physiology, not to mention additional work in nature study in the course of study. Ten years ago, in some cases the school hours have been shortened. The introduction of at least four new subjects under these conditions necessarily has had a tendency to produce either a crowded condition of the curriculum in the elementary schools or to cause a slurring of the more important subjects in the grades. All subjects in a course of study have their specific value, but not public school workers will deny the fact that the "three R's" are still the essentials of elementary school instruction.

In the last annual report of Dr. J. A. C. Chandler, superintendent of schools, he called attention to the fact that the penmanship of scholars in the Richmond public schools has not been all that could be desired. This fact he attributes to two changes in the system of writing during the past five years. He found that the general work in arithmetic, spelling and music was unusually good.

Manual Training. Referring to the manual arts department the report states that there has been too much waste of material and a lack of correlation of manual training with the work of the primary grades. This department, the report adds, is in need of re-adjustment.

During the session of 1909-10 the city spent for superintending and special teachers in music and manual training \$17,472. This sum includes the salary of each principal. In the opinion of the superintendent the school buildings are too small to contain enough grades to justify the employment of supervising principals at good salaries.

It is by no means the desire of Dr. Chandler that the supervision of the schools be weakened. But he is now urging that the number of special teachers be reduced as rapidly as possible. This year there are six teachers instead of seven for instruction in manual arts.

At present there is a director of music and three special teachers of music. The annexation of Manchester added thirty-five grades, and for the time in the Southside musical instruction in the public schools began

with the opening of the school this year.

The kindergartens of Richmond are also doing fine work. However, instead of utilizing them as an appendix to the system Dr. Chandler is advocating that they be used as the mouth, as a direct entrance into the primary grades.

From 1890 until 1909 a period of twenty years, Richmond spent on new buildings for the elementary schools \$122,000. This was for the Chamberlaine, Randolph, Nicholson and Fairmount schools. In the latter case an addition was built to the school which had come to the city by the annexation of Manchester. In the latter case an addition to this, by annexation, the city received from Henrico county Sidney School, for whites, in the West End, two two-room buildings for whites, in the East End, and four small colored schools. By the annexation of Manchester, three additional school buildings were added to the city, but none of the buildings in the annexed territory was large enough to accommodate the pupils residing there.

Present Problem.

The problem which now confronts the city is whether the Capital of the State, in which one person of every sixteen of the population of Virginia resides, can afford to have it as a matter of record that, at present there is operation but two up-to-date elementary school buildings—the William F. Fox School, Hanover Avenue Addition and Elm Streets, and the Arenas School, at Pine and China Streets. It is believed that if the city would make a short time bond issue of \$500,000 for a new school buildings it would not be necessary to ask for further funds for this purpose for the next ten years.

According to the report of Dr. Chandler, Bellevue School is unsuited for the purpose, and the Springfield School is no better. Dr. Chandler is anxious that the Jefferson School be turned into an industrial or vocational school and run night and day. The Nicholson School is said not to be large enough to accommodate the children of Fulton.

It will be necessary for the city to do a great deal in the improvement of the negro schools, in order to accommodate all of the children. The George Mason School is overcrowded and the Fulton colored school is taught in three different places.

There are some of the bad features of Richmond's schools, but the good points offset the former two to one.

It is more pleasing to write of the magnificent John Marshall High School, which occupies the entire square bounded by Marshall, Ninth, Clay and Eighth Streets. The total cost of this build-

ing, land and equipment was \$575,000.

For academic purposes there are fifty-five rooms, with four rooms used for physical, chemical, biological and physical geography laboratories. The science equipment is one of the most complete in the South in any secondary school building.

Demand Very Great.

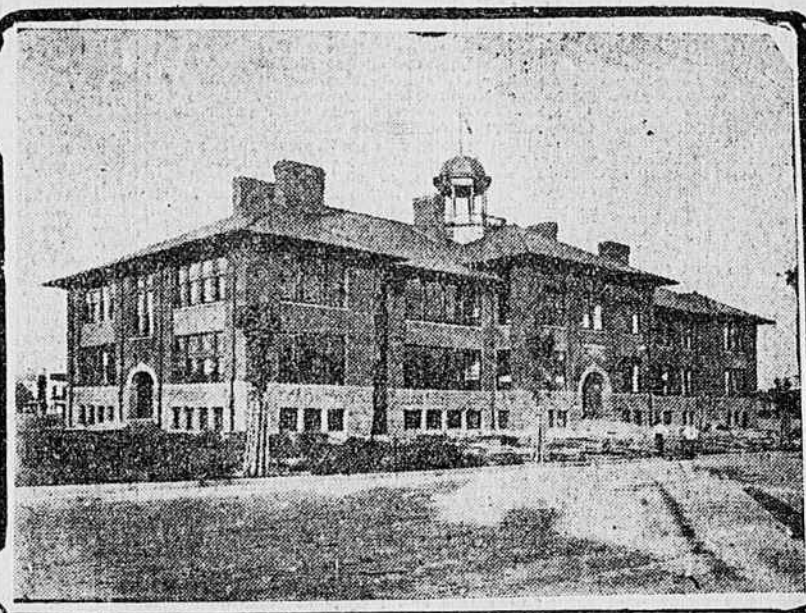
Because public school education is for the masses, as well as the classes, the demands upon the high schools are greater than ever before. While twenty years ago the completion of the high school course looked toward entering college it is now realized that not all children should enter high school with the intention of entering college. Moreover, it is now known that because the college preparatory course is the proper thing for the boy who is to go to college, it is not the proper thing for the boy who may never enter college. Latin is no longer the sine qua non at the John Marshall High School.

After the annexation of Manchester, April 15, 1910, there were employed a total of 115 teachers, not including the night schools, teachers, principals and supervisors, of whom 312 were white and 107 colored. Of this number 20 were contracted with as assistant superintendents, holding college certificates and nineteen as principals, of whom seventeen held college certificates, one a professional certificate and one a first grade certificate.

One director of music and four assistants all hold special certificates allowing them to teach music only. In the manual arts department the director holds a college certificate and the thirteen instructors special certificates. One kindergarten supervisor, ten kindergarten directors and ten kindergarten assistants all hold special certificates. Of a total of forty-eight high school teachers fourteen hold college certificates, eleven professional, nineteen first grade, one special first, one training class and two special certificates for the subjects which they are teaching. Deducting the above teachers, supervisors, directors, superintendents and principals, there remain teaching in the elementary schools of Richmond 310 men and women, of whom 263 are white and 107 colored. Of the white teachers in the elementary schools, five hold college certificates, twelve professional, one hundred and sixty-two first grade, nineteen training class and five high school certificates. Of the colored teachers, seven hold professional, eighty-seven first grade, twelve training class and one special grade certificates.

Education in Richmond.

This shows that in the schools of



THE WILLIAM F. FOX SCHOOL.

course by the Board of Examiners is indicated by the number of teachers designated as holding "Training Class Certificates." The Armstrong High School, colored, conducts a normal training course of one year, under one teacher.

Many of the colored teachers in Virginia and practically all of them in Richmond and Henrico and Chesterfield counties receive their training in the Armstrong School.

The regulations of the School Board require that no one shall be elected as teacher to the high school unless he or she holds a collegiate certificate. At present only about 33 1-3 per cent of the high school teachers hold collegiate certificates.

On account of the strain of the class room and the great necessity for study upon the teachers, a movement has been set on foot to inaugurate a "Sabbatical Year" for the teachers, not unlike that existing in some cities of this country, whereby a teacher would be off one year in seven or eight or nine or ten, on half-pay. If such a policy were adopted for one year in ten, it would mean that one-tenth of the teachers would be on furlough each year, this "Sabbatical Year" to be spent in study and travel. It is believed that such a plan would add materially to the efficiency of the teachers who enjoyed the benefits of study and travel. Such a plan, of course, would be sufficiently safe-guarded to see that all teachers securing a "Sabbatical Year" would return to work.

One of the many important things accomplished by the School Board in the past few years was the introduction of cooking in the higher grades of some of the colored schools.

Richmond only about ten teachers have graduated from a regular chartered normal school, and means that the teachers have, with few exceptions, been educated in Richmond, and have had some normal training in the post-graduate course, as it has been termed, of the high school. This post-graduate course, considering the limitations under which it has worked, has done remarkably well, but with one teacher no practice work it cannot be termed a "Normal School." Since 1907 a recognition of this normal training


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The Richmond Light Infantry Blues In History

(Continued From Sixth Page)

of the attack on Richmond of the gunboat Pamlico. From that day they were continuously under arms. When they reported with the Army of Northern Virginia at Fredericksburg they numbered four officers and ninety-five men. On June 17, 1862, the company was mustered in for the war, becoming Company A, of the Forty-sixth Virginia, and being commanded by Captain O. Jennings Wise.

Every schoolboy knows how the company had its ranks decimated by wounds and disease several times, and how at Roanoke Island it was almost annihilated, the heroic remnant surrendering to the enemy. After every disaster the Blues were recruited up and fought to the last of the Confederate hopes at Appomattox. Two of their captains—O. Jennings Wise and Fred Carter—were killed, and three others were desperately wounded.

When the necessity of defending the fire sides of the city and State from an organized enemy was no longer necessary, the Blues found that per-haps worse enemy remained to be encountered. So, early in January, 1865, the command was reorganized

and stood ready for any service. In 1877 withdrawing from the regiment, the Blues were chartered as an independent command.

At Pochontas Strike.

Although the company was often called out for short tours of duty, such as guarding the State Penitentiary during two fires and an earthquake, and protecting prisoners in case of threatened lynchings, the Blues did not see any continuous active service until the strike in the Pochontas collieries in 1885. On May 13 of that year they were given command of the trouble under command of Major Sol. Cutchen. There were then two companies.

Volunteering at the first call in the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, the Blues became attached to the Fourth Virginia Regiment. They were given command on leaving Richmond by an enthusiastic concourse. They formed part of the army of occupation in Cuba after active hostilities ended. The battalion was reformed after the return to Richmond.

Company B was ordered to Emporia March 23, 1900, to aid in preserving order. The next day A Company

also went.

The command had its part of service in connection with the street car strike in Richmond in 1903. It was then commanded by Major L. L. Cheate-wood, and E. W. Bowles, now the major commanding, was captain of Company A. Since those days, two companies have been added, the battalion now numbering four.

The Blues have always been the escort of the Governors of Virginia upon their visits to expositions. This was true of the Pan-American, St. Louis and Jamestown celebrations.

The close and friendly relations which have sprung up of recent years between the Richmond Light Infantry Blues, the First Company of Governor's Foot Guards, of Hartford, Conn., the Second Company of New Haven, and the Providence, R. I. Light Infantry, are exceedingly pleasant memories in the minds of nearly every member now with the command. These date back only a few years, and extend down to a few weeks since, making a chain of delightful social occasions. Incidental to the interchange of visits, there have been public parades which have linked these commands together in the minds of the public.